

# Our house to (calgary + vancouver) Koolhaus

>>> Always more Up than Country, UpCountry Interiors nevertheless bore a name that tapped neatly into the Martha-and-Ralph sentiment of the day when it opened a first western store in Vancouver in 1998. Five years later the retailer has split from its eastern parent, expanded to Calgary and Whistler, and this month catches the prevailing winds again when it recognizes its shift to a more modernist aesthetic and changes its name to Koolhaus. Vancouver-based designers Bombast and Hom remain mainstays at all three locations; there's an online catalogue with more than 17,000 items. [www.koolhausdesign.com](http://www.koolhausdesign.com).



(regina)

## The Real MacKenzie

*Somewhere a prairie lawyer is smiling.*

>>> When the Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery opened in 1953 it fulfilled the dream of a Regina lawyer who had furiously collected the Old Masters and items from Asia and the Middle East. Alas, subsequent scrutiny showed that unscrupulous dealers had taken advantage of the prairie enthusiast and many of his acquisitions were lesser works or outright fakes. As curator Timothy Long says, "A cloud of uncertainty has hung over the MacKenzie collection." So the decision to make the original collection a cornerstone of the gallery's 50th-anniversary celebrations might seem a little ironic were it not for a new twist: many of the original purchases have recently been reassessed as the straight goods after all. The MacKenzie Bequest closes November 16; That's My Wonderful Town, with work by contemporary Regina artists, continues till January 20.—*Cindy Richmond*

(okanagan falls)

## Nice nose, spicy label

*2003: an excellent year for...graphics.*



>>> So Okanagan wine is now on par with anywhere else's. Great—but how's their marketing? That's catching up fast too. Visitor-friendly wineries, check. Slicker labels, check. Better yarns, that too.

Consider the recent emergence of wineries with stories to tell. The first was Blasted Church, which latched onto the legend of a church dynamited back in '29 ([www.blasted-church.com](http://www.blasted-church.com)). Now there's the launch by nearby Hawthorne Mountain of their See Ya Later Ranch series ([www.hmvineyard.com](http://www.hmvineyard.com)). This story revolves around "one of the vineyard site's first inhabitants," who buried his many dogs in their own cemetery, complete with tiny tombstones.

If it's a trend, we like it. Hip, but in a folksy, unassuming way that stresses sense of place. In 2002 and '03 these labels have the advantage of being launched with two of the best vintages the Okanagan will ever see.

**Book + CD**  
*The month in words and song.*



**Navigating a New World: Canada's Global Future** by Lloyd Axworthy (Alfred A. Knopf). Like warm milk, the words "Canadian foreign policy" are generally sleep-inducing. But the former minister of foreign affairs (now director at UBC's Liu Centre) has managed to make 400-odd pages of political analysis, well, readable. The book is a road map for participatory democracy and a call for new codes of conduct on human rights—things the Nobel Peace Prize nominee seems to know something about.—*Jacqueline Moore*

**Reconstruction Site** by The Weakerthans (Epitaph).

With equal measures brain and brawn, this Winnipeg quartet graduates from the indie-rock underground in dazzling fashion. John Sampson's lyrics scan like short stories, and the band drops country flavours among

quicksilver riffs and thunderclap drums. Song title of the year: "Our Retired Explorer (Dines With Michel Foucault in Paris, 1961)." —*Jeff Bateman*

